CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 28 May 1998, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr. Sungar (Turkey)

GE.98-62189 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 794th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Egypt, Japan and Colombia. It is my intention, once we have exhausted the list of speakers for today, to take up directly for decision the requests from Guatemala and Swaziland to participate in the work of the Conference as observers during the current session. Before giving the floor to the first speaker on my list, I should like to make some opening remarks as Turkey assumes the presidency of the Conference for the next four weeks.

It is, indeed, a privilege and a daunting task for me to preside over the Conference so soon after joining it as the representative of my country. I would like to assure you that I will spare no effort to discharge the duties of the presidency with a view to serving the interests of the Conference at a time when we are confronted both with challenges and opportunities. I am sure that with the full cooperation and support of all of you we will be able to build on the achievement of the last session.

I should like, at the outset, to pay tribute to my predecessors in this function, Ambassador Norberg of Sweden, Ambassador Hofer of Switzerland and Ambassador Al-Hussami of Syria, who have displayed great energy, wisdom and perseverance which culminated in the long-sought decision CD/1501 and the accompanying Presidential statement. Finally, I should like to thank the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Petrovsky, his deputy, Mr. Bensmail, and his staff for providing me and my delegation with valuable counsel for the pursuit of our task.

Although Turkey's membership of the Conference on Disarmament is relatively new - 23 months to be precise - our institutional memory goes back to its early years when Turkey was an observer to the predecessors of the CD. Since then, we have held the Conference in high esteem and continue to attach great importance to its reputation as the sole multilateral negotiating forum on arms control and disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament has, in this decade alone, produced two major global disarmament treaties, namely the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (CWC) and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We have no doubt in our mind that the Conference will live up to its reputation and deliver other treaties on nuclear as well as conventional issues, as and when the members of this august body muster the necessary political will in the pursuit of a common goal to be achieved in the interest of the international community.

I am aware that, before the commencement of the 1998 session, the CD was criticized for not starting any substantive work after the conclusion of CTBT negotiations in August 1996, and, in fact, some preferred to describe the situation as one of "deep crisis". However, with the skilfully crafted decision CD/1501 on the programme of work, the Conference has created the mechanism that will allow it to embark on its substantive work without delay.

(The President)

As a matter of fact, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances, Ambassador de Icaza of Mexico, has already launched the process of organizing the work of that Committee, and the Special Coordinators on anti-personnel landmines, Ambassador John Campbell of Australia, on prevention of an arms race in outer space, Ambassador Palihakkara of Sri Lanka, on transparency in armaments, Mr. Pavel Grecu of Romania, on improved and effective functioning of the Conference, Ambassador Illanes of Chile, on review of the agenda of the Conference, Ambassador Náray of Hungary, and on expansion of the membership of the Conference, Ambassador Hofer of Switzerland, have already started the implementation of their respective mandates. I look forward to productive cooperation with these distinguished representatives. As far as I am concerned, I have already undertaken, with the close cooperation of the outgoing and incoming presidents, to build on the process initiated by my predecessor to translate into action the decision to pursue intensive consultations and seek the views of the members of the Conference on appropriate methods and approaches for dealing with agenda item 1, taking into consideration all proposals and views on this item. For this purpose, I have indicated to all groups my immediate plans as to how I intend to proceed in this respect. I am sure we are all aware of the magnitude and complexity of the tasks ahead of us in this regard and, therefore, I would earnestly appeal to all delegations to display the necessary spirit of compromise and flexibility, bearing in mind the highest priority attached to this item. The cooperation and support of all will be crucial in the attainment of our shared objective. I believe that this is all the more needed in view of the recent events that have significantly altered the international setting in which the Conference on Disarmament operates.

I should now like to give the floor to the first speaker on my list, Ambassador Zahran of Egypt.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt) (translated from Arabic): Mr. President, on behalf of the Egyptian delegation I would like to welcome you and congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, especially since you are assuming this responsibility at the same time as the duties of your new post as Permanent Representative of Turkey, a country with which Egypt has historically maintained close friendly relations. I am confident that you will effectively continue the efforts begun by your predecessors Ambassadors Norberg of Sweden, Hofer of Switzerland and Al-Hussami of Syria in order to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament. We are confident that your diplomatic skills and wide experience will help you to guide the CD successfully. I would also like to welcome our two other new colleagues, the distinguished Ambassadors of the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. I can assure you and them of my delegation's full cooperation. I would also take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador de Icaza of Mexico on assuming the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances, and Ambassadors Hofer, Campbell, Náray, Illanes and Palihakkara and Minister Grecu on their appointment as Special Coordinators of the consultations on six topics of the work programme of the Conference on Disarmament for the 1998 session.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

We stand today at a critical juncture, critical for the future of the Conference on Disarmament and critical for multilateral disarmament efforts as a whole. As our experience at the 1997 session demonstrated, the CD is facing substantial difficulties. The events of the past few weeks leave no doubt that the bumpy road to disarmament is facing major challenges. It is at times like this that we must carefully consider how to deal with the obstacles we are facing. We must tackle the core of the problem and not just content ourselves with nibbling gingerly at its periphery. The core of the problem is nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

The nuclear tests that were recently conducted by India give an indication of the magnitude of the problem, but in the midst of the outcry of protest that ensued, and while in no way attempting to provide any justification for nuclear testing, we should have the courage to admit that this situation represents no more than the tip of the iceberg. In this regard I recall that during our negotiations on the CTBT, in which I chaired the Legal and Institutional Working Group, I proposed, on behalf of Egypt and with the support of most of the non-nuclear States, that the scope of the ban should cover all nuclear tests. Unfortunately, certain nuclear-weapon States insisted that the ban's scope should be limited to nuclear-test explosions. Therefore, I went on record in the CD and later on in the United Nations General Assembly in 1996 as deploring this situation, which deprived the CTBT of its universality and turned it into merely another partial test-ban treaty. While in no way absolving any State of its responsibility, I wish to make it clear that this situation will affect the credibility of nuclear disarmament efforts. This was amply demonstrated by the dismal results of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 NPT Review Conference, a session which we all know was a fiasco.

In this connection, I would like to refer to the statement I made on behalf of the Egyptian delegation before the CD two months ago, on 26 March 1998 to be precise, in which I cautioned against the persistence of the attitudes adopted by some countries in the CD which could compromise the outcome of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference in the year 2000.

It is important, even essential, after a failure so dismal as that of the second session of the NPT Preparatory Committee, for us to pause, consider the lessons to be learned and act upon those lessons, otherwise we will be condemning ourselves to repeating the same mistakes. The first lesson that I can deduce is that the credibility of the non-proliferation regime has been called into question. It is impossible to deny that the ultimate goal of the 1968 NPT is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The preamble and article VI of the Treaty are clear in this regard. Article VI states that

(continued in English)

> "Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament".

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

(continued in Arabic)

We accepted that time lag in 1968, being confident that after a maximum period of 25 years, and certainly by 1995, this objective would have been attained. Since 1968, however, this "early date" has not yet come. Given this situation, the nuclear-weapon States should listen to the billions of people around the world. They should listen to the message delivered to them loudly and clearly by the NGOs. They should listen to the highest legal authority on this planet - the International Court of Justice - which stated in 1996:

(continued in English)

> "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control".

(continued in Arabic)

They should listen also to the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities resolution 1996/14, operative paragraph 2 of which stipulates:

(continued in English)

> "The Sub-Commission ... recommends that the relevant international forums, in particular the Conference on Disarmament, should immediately start negotiations on nuclear disarmament to reduce nuclear weapons globally within a phased programme, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons, thus contributing to the enhancement of international peace and security and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and above all the right to life".

(continued in Arabic)

They should listen, finally, to the voice of reason instead of formulating unconvincing arguments, especially in this post-cold-war era. The first lesson is that nuclear-weapon States have not been able to convince countries with nuclear capabilities to adhere to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, a situation which has affected the credibility and effectiveness of the NPT. The second lesson is that some, in their obstinate determination to reject any reference to Israel, the State with a nuclear weapons programme outside the scope of the international non-proliferation regime, which on a number of occasions is reported to have threatened to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States, are continuing to block any meaningful international discussion on how to achieve the universality of the NPT. Consequently, the refusal to include in the report of the second NPT PrepCom any language taken word for word from the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference caused the total failure of that PrepCom. This second lesson is that the non-proliferation regime has been called into question and jeopardized because of the attempts

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

to circumvent the principles of non-proliferation and apply them selectively instead of confirming the commitments undertaken in 1995 to make sincere efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The third lesson is that international public opinion and NGOs and indeed the majority of non-nuclear-weapon States belonging to both the developed North and the developing South have reached the conclusion that something substantive must come out of these interminable meetings in the field of nuclear disarmament. It is my belief that we should reflect carefully on the lessons learned from the events of the past few weeks and use them to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. President, as I stated earlier, it is at a critical juncture that you are assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We have adopted a package that constitutes our programme of work for this year and are still preparing to embark on actual negotiations. One of the most important mechanisms that we have agreed to establish is a more active role for the troika, composed of the current, previous and next Presidents, in order to conduct in-depth consultations on how to start negotiations on item 1 of our agenda, entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". Despite the fact that this procedure falls short of our expectations, as already stated, we hope that certain States will have had time to reflect upon the lessons of the past few weeks and that the troika's consultations will lead to the early establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament in the CD. In this connection, I would like to remind you of the proposal presented by Egypt to the CD in document CD/1453 dated 1 April 1997 concerning a draft mandate for the proposed ad hoc committee which took into account the various concerns of States and called for parallel negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons as well as a comprehensive agreement banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, in accordance with paragraph 4 of the 1995 NPT Review Conference's decision on "Principles and objectives".

Negotiations on a treaty to ban fissile material should commence within the framework of the ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament in accordance with the mandate contained in the Shannon report, which took into account the concerns voiced by all countries. While expressing overall support for the ban on the production of fissile material, I would like to emphasize that this ban will not be effective unless it is applied to future as well as already produced fissile material. Confining the ban to future production would be a limited non-proliferation measure with no real disarmament value. For the ban on the production of fissile material to be effective, stockpiles of fissile material that could be used for the production of nuclear weapons in any country must be declared and subjected to inspection under international supervision and control. Even if the ban were to be limited to future production, such a step could serve as the basis for any verification regime designed to ensure compliance with the provisions of the negotiated treaty.

The programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons which I had the privilege to submit to the Conference on Disarmament on 8 August 1996 on behalf of 28 delegations from the Group of 21 is an important input

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

intended to contribute to the start of negotiations in the ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament once it is established by the CD. The programme of action recognizes that there is a requirement for active multilateral efforts to identify, negotiate and implement specific step-by-step measures for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons at both the regional and international levels. It contains concrete measures to be taken by the proposed ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament in three phases, the last of which would be completed by the year 2020. Moreover, the report of the Canberra Commission and any other proposals that might be made could also be taken into consideration when negotiating the phased programme for nuclear disarmament with the aim of implementing the provisions of the NPT and responding to the will of the international community. Progress must be achieved in this field if we wish to ensure the success of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

As far as NSAs are concerned, the best assurance for non-nuclear-weapon States is the elimination of nuclear weapons. However, some States are still developing their nuclear weapons, making them more accurate and more target-specific, thereby leaving no doubt as to the possibility of their use by their possessors. Is it logical for States that have voluntarily renounced the nuclear option to demand legally binding positive, as well as negative, security assurances? The unilateral or multilateral assurances so far given by nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT, which were reflected in Security Council resolutions 255 and 984, fall short of the needs and requirements of the non-nuclear-weapon States since such assurances are conditional, non-comprehensive and not legally binding and have not been negotiated multilaterally. Hence, serious negotiations should start without further delay on an international legally binding instrument to provide non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT with comprehensive and unconditional assurances in the ad hoc committee which we have agreed to establish for this purpose under the chairmanship of Ambassador de Icaza, the Permanent Representative of Mexico. Such an instrument could take the form of a convention or a protocol to be annexed to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In the light of the above, we attach special importance to the subject of transparency in armaments. Egypt believes that this issue should be dealt with as a comprehensive and non-discriminatory confidence-building measure in such a way as to cover all types of armaments. While regretting that the efforts to expand the scope of the United Nations Register have not yielded the desired results, Egypt welcomes the appointment of a special coordinator to consider the various aspects of transparency in armaments during this session of the Conference on Disarmament, particularly in the light of General Assembly resolution 52/38 B on transparency in weapons of mass destruction, in order to make transparency comprehensive in all fields of armaments. In this regard, the Cartagena ministerial meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement stressed in its final document issued on 20 May 1998:

(continued in English)

"the importance of transparency in armaments, in view of the dangerous consequences to international peace and security that the development,

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

production and stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and the excessive production of conventional arms have".

(continued in Arabic)

We have full confidence in Mr. Pavel Grecu of Romania and hope that his efforts will lead to speedy agreement on a negotiating mandate for the ad hoc committee on that subject, as stipulated in the programme of work proposed by the Group of 21 during the 1997 session.

We attach particular importance to the work of this Conference in connection with the prevention of an arms race in outer space and we are confident that the Special Coordinator on this issue, Ambassador Palihakkara of Sri Lanka, will energetically seek agreement on an updated mandate to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on this issue with a view to beginning negotiations for the conclusion of a multilateral agreement or agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, building on the progress already achieved by the CD in this regard. We call upon all countries, especially those possessing outer space technological capabilities, to engage in these negotiations in good faith. We must act now to ensure that mankind does not embark on a militarization of outer space, which should be preserved as a common heritage of mankind to be used solely for peaceful purposes.

As the Conference on Disarmament is approaching the substantive stage of its work, the Egyptian delegation would like to reiterate the importance of the subject of anti-personnel landmines. Egypt is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, with about 23 million landmines planted on its territory by foreign Powers during the Second World War and the Middle East conflict. The elimination and clearance of these mines is of the highest priority to my country for humanitarian as well as developmental considerations. The clearance of such minefields should be the responsibility of the foreign Powers which planted them on Egyptian territory.

Believing in this important principle, the World Health Assembly adopted resolution 51.8 of 16 May 1998 on "concerted public health action on anti-personnel mines", given the serious consequences for health caused by anti-personnel landmines and the importance of developing public health programmes for anti-personnel-mine injury prevention and control. Operative paragraph 5 of the said resolution reads as follows:

(continued in English)

"Urges governments that have planted mines in the territories of other countries to provide the latter with the required maps and identification of the minefields they planted and to cooperate in minefield clearance in the countries concerned so as to avoid further injuries and deaths of civilians".

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

(continued in Arabic)

With your permission, Mr. President, I have requested the CD secretariat to circulate this resolution as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament. I also request the Special Coordinator on anti-personnel landmines to take this resolution into consideration in his consultations with the various delegations.

The Cartagena ministerial meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement emphasized in its final document, dated 20 May:

(continued in English)

> "that elimination of landmines should take into account the legitimate national security concern of States as well as their legitimate rights to use appropriate measures for self-defence."

(continued in Arabic)

The Ministers went on to call upon the international community to

(continued in English)

> "provide the necessary assistance to landmine clearance operations as well as to the rehabilitation of the victims in landmine-affected countries. They further called for international assistance to ensure full access of affected countries to material, equipment, technology and financial resources for mine clearance. The Ministers also called for continued humanitarian assistance for victims of landmines."

(continued in Arabic)

The Ministers went on to call upon the States responsible for laying landmines outside their territories to

(continued in English)

> "assume responsibility for the landmines, to cooperative with the affected countries, to provide the necessary information, maps and technical assistance for their clearance, to contribute towards defrayal of the costs of clearance and provide compensation for any ensuing losses."

(continued in Arabic)

I am confident that Ambassador Campbell of Australia, with his wide experience in this matter, will include these important elements in his report which he will be submitting to the Conference by the end of the second part of the 1998 session.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

We should not neglect three important substantive or organizational aspects that will help to improve the performance of this Conference. We have full confidence that Ambassadors Hofer, Náray and Illanes, with their well-known experience and diplomatic skills, will make important contributions in this regard. As the former Special Coordinator of the 1997 CD session on the IEF of the Conference, I will place all my experience at the disposal of Ambassador Illanes to facilitate his mission.

I would like to conclude by expressing our sincere hope that all States will draw the necessary conclusions from the adverse consequences of the events we have witnessed in the past few weeks, and that this Conference is now ready to live up to its responsibilities as the only multilateral forum for global disarmament negotiations, particularly in the fields which are of priority concern to the international community, and primarily nuclear disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Japan, Ambassador Hayashi.

Mr. HAYASHI (Japan): Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the high post of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Your wisdom and experience will, undoubtedly, prove beneficial to us all and its is fortunate that we can rely on your able leadership at this most challenging time. I can assure you of the fullest cooperation of my delegation and would like to take a moment to express my appreciation to Ambassador Al-Hussami of the Syrian Arab Republic, the previous President of the CD, for his dedication and hard work.

I have asked for the floor today to report to the Conference on Disarmament on the "Seminar Conference on the Technical Issues for a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty" (FMCT) which was held on 11 and 12 May at the Palais des Nations under the sponsorship for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

During the second session for the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the parties to the NPT, the PrepCom heard resounding remarks across the board supporting the early commencement of FMCT negotiations.

Our work in the second part of this year's session of the CD has started and this, I believe, provides us with a new opportunity to make constructive progress. Judging from the promising comments of many delegations during the second NPT PrepCom, many of us seem to agree that the CD should take an unambiguous and determined step towards making an FMCT a reality. While we are aware of the concerns of certain countries that wish to place reconditions on the start of the FMCT negotiations, surely the three years of doldrums are sufficient for us to realize that absolutely no progress will be made unless we agree to begin?

(Mr. Hayashi, Japan)

Having considered the well-known difficulties in commencing FMCT negotiations right away, and having been convinced that we could make some intermediate efforts in order to create a positive atmosphere for the start of negotiations, and with a view to start concentrating on an FMCT, Japan hosted the aforementioned Seminar Conference of an ad hoc nature outside the CD, but close to the CD conference room, during the first two days of the second part of the CD's 1998 session.

The purpose of the Seminar Conference was to focus on the technical, and not the political, aspects of an FMCT, and such issues as how to start negotiations were not considered. This approach was based on the understanding that, since an FMCT involves various technical issues, attempts to engage in technical discussions could contribute to paving the way to actual negotiations.

I would now like to speak about the Seminar Conference in more detail. Governmental experts in charge of nuclear issues from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Israel, Japan, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America participated in their personal capacities. Experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) also attended, as did a number of leading non-governmental experts. Many delegates to the Conference on Disarmament were also involved in the discussions, and my delegation was grateful for their participation as well as generous logistic support provided by the CD secretariat. In this respect, Mr. Bensmail's help was invaluable. Mr. Hiroyoshi Kurihara, Senior Executive Director of the Nuclear Material Control Centre of Japan, chaired the Conference.

One and a half days of informal but intensive discussions served as a valuable opportunity for all participants to have a frank, in-depth exchange of views on the important question of how to address the various technical issues concerning an FMCT. It is hoped that these discussions will be conducive to further promoting our groundwork for the commencement of FMCT negotiations.

I would like to touch on some of the salient points of the Chairman's summary of the Seminar Conference and I hope we will be able to learn from the experts' discussions. This summary is the Chairman's personal statement and without prejudice to the views of any expert or CD delegation that participated in the Seminar.

The first session for the Seminar began with discussions regarding the coverage of an FMCT in terms of the Shannon report and the mandate contained therein. Participants were of the opinion that all plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) should be subject to a strict verification mechanism under the terms of the treaty. The questions surrounding uranium 233 were also discussed.

(Mr. Hayashi, Japan)

In addition to fissile materials not directly usable for nuclear weapons, such as low-enriched uranium (LEU) and spent fuels, the problem of existing stockpiles was also addressed.

Concerning the issue of verification, many participants felt that both the diversion of fissile material and any undeclared enrichment and reprocessing should be detected through routine-type inspections that would correspond roughly to the current comprehensive safeguard measures of the IAEA. But it was felt that if the level of assurance provided through routine-type inspections was limited, challenge-type inspections could prove useful. Complementary measures similar to the Additional Protocol of the "93+2" Programme were also thought to be important considerations.

Participants considered several verification alternatives. Consideration was given to the kind of facilities to be covered, their corresponding verification measures and the trade-off between the expected level of assurance and the cost of each alternative. In addition, the applicability of the existing IAEA safeguards mechanism to an FMCT was thought to warrant further careful consideration.

With regard to nuclear-weapon States, as well as those States not party to the NPT, many participants stressed the need for developing national systems such as States' systems of accounting for, and control of, nuclear material (SSAC) and/or a physical protection system.

Participants further considered both problems resulting from facilities located in nuclear-weapon States that were not designed to be placed under safeguards and difficulties in States where military and civilian fuel cycles are not entirely separated. In this context, it was suggested that prevention of leakage of information with proliferation risks would be an important issue for consideration.

It was felt that the issue of termination of verification under an FMCT needed to be further addressed.

Many participants saw IAEA as the most suitable body to carry out verification tasks under an FMCT. However, they were cautioned that, because an FMCT would lead to an expansion of verification activities, due consideration should be given to the new infrastructure that these activities would surely require.

Issues of ensuring transparency and irreversibility were also addressed in the Seminar. Though these elements may fall outside the scope of an FMCT, many participants felt that they were extremely important and deserved consideration.

One of the experts noted that transparency is an essential component of irreversibility, and that, to ensure irreversibility, it would be desirable to take several steps in parallel with an FMCT, the first being the declaration and proper management of military direct-use material withdrawn from dismantled weapons and such material considered surplus and designated for

(Mr. Hayashi, Japan)

transfer to civilian use. However, some warned that such efforts would be more successful were they pursued independently from an FMCT, rather than addressed by the treaty itself. Finally, a participant stressed that the leap from secrecy to transparency is a political decision.

Many participants expressed their interest in an Australian proposal made at the Second PrepCom of the NPT 2000 Review Conference concerning a phased approach with an FMCT being the core and first step.

Attached to the text of this speech are three documents, one of which is the complete version of the Chairman's summary of the Seminar Conference. Also attached is a list of participants as well as the schedule of the Conference. I would like to request that the secretariat issue these papers as an official document and hope they will prove useful and encouraging, motivating us to begin FMCT negotiations as soon as possible.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Japan for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia, Ambassador Castro Guerrero.

Mr. CASTRO GUERRERO (Colombia) (translated from Spanish): Since I am taking the floor for the first time under your presidency, allow me, Mr. President, to convey my sincerest congratulations to you and assure you of the support and cooperation of my delegation in the difficult task of guiding the Conference on Disarmament along the path of substantive work. Your experience and extensive knowledge of the subject provide us with an assurance in this regard. I am also pleased to note the presence of the Ambassadors of Korea and the Russian Federation as new representatives to the Conference, and wish them a warm welcome.

The city of Cartagena de Indias, on Colombia's Caribbean coast, was the venue last week for a ministerial meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. The Bureau met to prepare for the summit of heads of State and government scheduled for Durban in South Africa, and examined the Movement's agenda for the coming years.

Following two days of intense deliberations, the final communiqué of the meeting was adopted. I would ask you, Sir, to circulate as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament the chapter of this document entitled "Disarmament and international security", to which the Ambassador of Egypt referred extensively in his scintillating speech this morning. In view of its content and the broad support it enjoys, I consider that a document of this nature might be of interest for the current work of the Conference. A copy of the chapter has been handed to the secretariat.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Colombia for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Soutar.

Mr. SOUTAR (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Mr. President, could I first of all welcome you to the Conference on Disarmament and congratulate you on the rapid assumption of the heavy responsibilities of the presidency? I should like to assure you that you can count on the full cooperation of my delegation as you undertake your new responsibilities.

I have asked for the floor to draw attention to the agreement reached on 25 May by the member States of the European Union on a Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. Now this Code of Conduct sets high common standards for arms exports from European Union member States. It establishes criteria for assessing export licence applications, including a commitment not to export arms where there is a clearly identifiable risk that the equipment might be used for international aggression or internal repression. It provides a mechanism for member States to circulate and consult on licence denials, as well as the provision, by each member State, of an annual report on their defence exports and implementation of the Code. In the view of my delegation, this is a ground-breaking initiative. It is the first time, we believe, such a mechanism has been applied to conventional arms exports. I shall be writing to the secretariat to request that the text of the Code is circulated as an official document of the Conference.

Mr. PALIHAKKARA (Sri Lanka): I have a short announcement. Before doing so, since this is the first time I am taking the floor under your leadership, Mr. President, let me say how pleased we are to see you, a friendly representative of a friendly country, leading our deliberations. We pledge to you our fullest cooperation.

This is simply to announce that open-ended consultations on item 3, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", will be held on Friday 5 June in the Council chamber at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Ambassador Palihakkara, for your kind words. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Campbell.

Mr. CAMPBELL (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, and welcome to the driver's seat. I am sure you will take us forward with your foot firmly on the accelerator. I, too, have a procedural announcement to make. We have circulated this morning an invitation to all delegations to open-ended consultations on landmines to be held on Tuesday 2 June at 10 o'clock in this Council chamber.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): First of all, this is a good opportunity for me, Mr. President, in the first session over which you preside, to extend to you my Government's and my personal felicitations on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference at this critical juncture in the work of this body. I believe it is no secret that the close brotherly relations between our countries are legendary, and many searching for a rationale for these relations have described it as a love affair. We are therefore most happy to see you, so soon after assuming charge of your responsibilities in Geneva,

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

come to this Conference and assume the Chair at this important point in our work. We also wish to extend our great appreciation to our brother, the distinguished representative of Syria, for the very diligent and successful manner in which he conducted the work of this Conference during the past four weeks. He has culminated the efforts of our body and achieved results which have been the most significant for this year.

At the last two sessions of this Conference, Pakistan has been obliged to take the floor and to draw attention to the grave implications of India's nuclear-weapons tests, as well as the accompanying escalatory actions and declarations of the Hindu fundamentalist Government in New Delhi, its declaration of India as a nuclear-weapon State, its decision to proceed with nuclear weaponization, its declaration of the right to use nuclear weapons and its threat of the use of force against Pakistan, especially across the Line of Control in Kashmir. In this context, I would like to read into the records of this Conference the text of a press statement which was issued in the early hours of this morning, 28 May 1998.

> "In the wake of the Indian nuclear tests, we have been receiving information of the possibility of attacks on our nuclear installations. The purpose behind this action would be to prevent us from taking an appropriate decision in our supreme national interest. Last night we received credible information that an attack was to be mounted before dawn. We were fully prepared to meet any eventuality in our defence. Immediate messages were transmitted to Washington and other permanent members of the Security Council. The Indian High Commissioner was summoned to the Foreign Office at 1 a.m. Pakistan time and clearly told that any attack on our nuclear facilities would be in violation of our existing agreement against attack on such facilities. He was asked to convey to New Delhi that we expected the Indian Government to desist from any irresponsible act. Any such act would warrant a swift and massive retaliation with unforeseen consequences. The Secretary-General of the United Nations was also immediately informed and requested to counsel restraint to New Delhi."

That is the text of the press statement that was issued early this morning in Islamabad. On behalf of my Government, I would like to urge the members of the Conference on Disarmament to also counsel restraint on the Government of India. We wish to caution that India's aggressive behaviour could lead to disastrous consequences. They must pull back from the brink.

Pakistan has exercised restraint. Whether or not Pakistan responds in kind to India's nuclear explosions, it should be noted that Pakistan has not claimed that it wants to become a nuclear-weapon State. We have not threatened to weaponize our nuclear capability. We have not threatened to use force, whether conventional or non-conventional. It is clear that the non-proliferation regime has been significantly eroded by the Indian actions. The NPT recognizes five nuclear-weapon States. Now one State has declared itself a nuclear-weapon State. Do the parties to the NPT, the permanent members of the Security Council and others accept India's proclamation of its status as a nuclear-weapon State? Until India's nuclear status is clarified

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

and established, until this happens, Pakistan cannot be expected to negotiate or accept additional instruments for non-proliferation. Until India's nuclear status has been clarified, any proposal for the opening of FMCT negotiations, or for the signature of the CTBT by other States, will be redundant and irrelevant. In being asked to join any treaty, we must know how many nuclear-weapon States will be its parties. If India signs the CTBT or joins the FMCT, will it do so as a nuclear-weapon State or as a non-nuclear-weapon State? We should know whether Pakistan will have the option to join these treaties as a nuclear-weapon State, as India is claiming, or only as a non-nuclear-weapon State.

The answers to these questions are not clear today. The answers will depend on what the international community decides in its response to India's claim to have become a nuclear-weapon State. Some voices unfortunately already want to accept the fait accompli created by India's tests and declarations. Will this also be the answer of the international community? That is the central question - not whether or not Pakistan decides to demonstrate its nuclear capability in reaction to India's provocative nuclear testing and its aggressive behaviour. This question must be answered if progress is to be made on various nuclear items on our agenda. Until then, to raise these questions and to press these in this hall would be a waste of time. We should focus on the real problem and not on irrelevant issues.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ambassador Akram, for your statement and for your kind words directed to the Chair, as well as about my country and the relationship between your country and mine.

So this concludes my list of speakers for today.

As I announced at the beginning of this plenary meeting, I should now like to take up for decision the requests from Guatemala and Swaziland to participate in the work of the Conference as observers during the current session. These requests are contained in document CD/WP.496, which is before you. May I take it that these requests are acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This concludes our business for today. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday 4 June 1998, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.